

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAM-01 IO-10

SAB-01 DHA-02 /071 W

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R 070720Z NOV 75

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7738

DIA WASHDC

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT POUCH

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE/ECJ2

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 11232

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI MOPS OCON EG IS

SUBJECT: CAIRO INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON OCTOBER 73 WAR

REF: CAIRO 10984

1. EMBASSY WOULD LIKE TO ADD SEVERAL ITEMS OF POLITICAL INTEREST TO REFTEL SUMMARY OF SUBJECT SYMPOSIUM.

2. ONE OF HANDOUTS PROVIDED FOREIGN PARTICIPANTS CONTAINED TWO PAGES OF SCURRILOUS, ANTI-SEMITIC CLICHES; E.G., NO COUNTRY EVER ACCEPTED JEWS INTO THEIR ARMY BECAUSE THEY KNOWN AS COWARDS, DUG THEIR OWN GRAVES, CONTROL BANKS, MORTGAGE COMPANIES, ETC. TWO AMERICAN PROFESSORS MANAGED TO TRACK DOWN AUTHOR OF THIS PIECE WHO WAS EGYPTIAN ARMY COLONEL PROUD OF HIS AUTHORSHIP. GIVEN NUMBER OF FOREIGN PARTICIPANTS, IT SEEMS VIRTUALLY CERTAIN THAT THIS BIT OF PROPAGANDA WILL BE PICKED UP BY ISRAELIS AND USED AGAINST EGYPT IN FUTURE.

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3. AHRAM EDITOR SID AHMAD, WHO WAS COVERING SYMPOSIUM, TOLD

AMERICAN PARTICIPANT THAT FIRST ISSUE OF AHRAH ON FIRST DAY HAD MENTIONED EARLIER ISRAELI SYMPOSIUM AND COST OF EGYPTIAN ONE AS 1.8. MILLION EGYPTIAN POUNDS. EGYPTIAN MILITARY CENSORS HAD COME AROUND AND ORDERED THAT AHRAH DROP ANY REFERENCE TO ISRAELI SYMPOSIUM AND "PERSUADED" AHRAH THAT IT WAS NOT GOOD IDEA TO MENTION COST IN COUNTRY "WHERE PEOPLE ARE STARVING." BOTH ITEMS DROPPED IN SUBSEQUENT ISSUES.

4. VIRTUALLY UNANIMOUS OPINION OF PARTICIPANTS WITH WHOM WE TALKED WAS THAT CONFERENCE, WHILE ADMINISTRATIVELY WELL ORGANIZED, WAS POORLY CONDUCTED, EGYPTIAN MILITARY OFFICERS UNSKILLED IN HANDLING QUESTIONS FOR SOPHISTICATED, KNOWLEDGEABLE AUDIENCE, AND IT WAS PUBLIC RELATIONS FIASCO. HOWEVER, FOR PARTICIPANTS KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT EGYPT AND ITS WAYS, OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT AND RENEW ACQUAINTANCES AND ENJOY EGYPTIAN HOSPITALITY OUTWEIGHED LIABILITIES. FOR NEOPHYTES TO EGYPTIAN SCENE, IMPRESSION LEFT WAS APPARENTLY NEGATIVE.

5. COMMENT: SYMPOSIUM APPEARS TO BE CLASSIC INSTANCE OF HASTILY-DECIDED, ILL-PREPARED EFFORT TO MATCH SIMILAR (ISRAELI) EXERCISE GOING AWRY IN IMPLEMENTATION STAGE THROUGH COMBINATION OF OVER-AMBITION, INEFFICIENCY AND LACK OF EXPERIENCE. FACT THAT ANTI-SEMITIC LITERATURE HANDED TO PARTICIPANTS UPON ARRIVAL THEREBY UNDERMINING EGYPTIAN IMAGE FROM BEGINNING IS EXAMPLE OF FAILINGS OF EGYPTIAN (IN THIS CASE MILITARY) BUREAUCRACY.
MAESTRONE

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